

BIENNIAL REPORT
OF
SEYBERT INSTITUTION



1913-1914

Biennial Report
OF
Seybert Institution

1913 - 1914

CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

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PREPARING FOR USEFUL FARM LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The last two years in the services rendered by the Seybert Institution represent a period of re-organization and re-adjustment intended to meet more or less diversified needs of the community by the establishing of new forms of service, the need for which has become apparent from past experience.

Re-adjustment in the relation between the Seybert Institution and the agencies with which we have been co-operating in the Children's Bureau, Children's Shelter, and the Registration Bureau with a corresponding change in our accounting system, have taken place as their economy and the efficiency of the work made them necessary.

The Observation Department of the Village and the organization of the Bureau for Social Research represent the additional work now undertaken by the Institution. They are the logical outgrowth of long contemplated and well recognized needs for more careful study of problems directly related to the Institution's work. In undertaking these new activities the Institution hopes that the results will be of genuine service to other agencies engaged in fields similar to that of the Seybert Institution.

During the year 1914 the most radical change in the affairs of the Seybert Institution is represented by the incorporation of the Institution and the consequent change in its administration. The Trustees appointed by the Court have transferred the assets and management of the Institution to a corporation organized under the laws of Pennsylvania, entitled The Adam and Maria Sarah Seybert Institution for Poor Boys and Girls, which has seven directors, two of whom are women.

THE WORK OF THE INSTITUTION

The service at present rendered by the Seybert Institution is centered about the following activities:

The Shelter on Waverly Street, Philadelphia.

The Children's Village at Meadowbrook.

The Children's Bureau.

The Bureau for Social Research.

In the case of the Shelter the work of the past two years has shown the need for increased financial and administrative responsibility on the part of the Institution so as to render possible the expansion of the work along broader lines for the Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty and the Children's Aid Society.

The Bureau for Social Research is an entirely new activity undertaken by the Institution in order to meet a special need for scientific research into the needs and social service in Philadelphia.

THE SHELTER

The Shelter, as is well known, is conducted as a temporary home for children prior to their being placed in Institutions, foster homes, or while judicial matters are being settled in their interests, and for their protection.

A clear conception of the service rendered by the Shelter during the years of 1913 and 1914 may be gained by the examination of the following figures:

Year.	Children admitted.	Children discharged.	Remaining Jan. 1.
1913	1,483	1,457	26
1914	1,593	1,575	18
Increase in year	6.9%	7.5%	30.8% decrease.

The above figures show that there has been an increase in the number of children cared for in the Shelter, but the number of children under its care on the first of January, 1914, was less than on the same date in 1913.

The exact distribution of the children cared for in the

Shelter during 1913 and 1914 according to the agencies from whom they were received is as follows :

CHILDREN RECEIVED IN SHELTER, 1913-1914.

Year	Received During Year	Children's Bureau	Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty	Children's Aid Society	Total	Monthly Average	Children's Bureau Agents' Combined Visits
1913	1,483	204	357	305	866	19	8,481
1914	1,593	337	215	585	1,137	21	7,543

Average received in Shelter per month 133.

Average combined visits per month 609.

The above figures indicate that in the course of the last two years there has been a marked change in the distribution of the children according to the agencies placing them in the Shelter, as follows :

Year	Children's Aid Society	Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty	Children's Bureau	Other Agencies.	Total
1913	20.6%	17.3%	20.5%	41.6%	100%
1914	36.7%	13.6%	21.1%	28.6%	100%

It is evident that there has been an increase in the proportion of the children coming from the Children's Bureau and from the Children's Aid Society, while there has been a decided decrease in the number of children from the Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty and from the other agencies of the city. A comparison of the figures for the two years shows that the Shelter cared for 47.9% more children sent by the Children's Aid Society and 39% more children sent by the Children's Bureau in 1914 than in 1913. On the other hand, during the same time a reduction of 16.3% in the number of children from the Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty and of 42.3% from the other agencies has taken place.

In connection with the Shelter a system of medical examination is maintained for the purpose of affording treatment whenever necessary, to prevent the spread of contagious disease and to assist the various agencies in their treatment of the case.

The following table indicates the amount of medical service rendered by the Shelter, the condition found and the treatment given :

MEDICAL WORK AT SHELTER, 1913-1914.												
Year		Children Examined	Required Treatment		Treatment Given	Diphtheria	Typhoid	Vaccination	Tuberculin Test	Wassermann Test	Children Sent to Hospital	Dental Care
			No.	Conditions								
1913	4,265	2,077	3,451	4,639	270		466	49	66	382	448
1914	5,220	2,703	4,017	5,575	243	5	422	34	64	466	493

The above figures show a decided increase in the amount of work done by the Medical Department of the Shelter. The following comparative table renders clear the extent of this increase :

	1913.	1914.	Increase.
Children examined	4,265	5,220	22.4%
Number in need of care	2,077	2,703	30.1%
Conditions found	3,451	4,017	16.4%

If we consider the number of treatments given we find that the average per month has increased from 422 in 1913 to 464 in 1914, or 9.9%. The Dental Care given increased from 448 in 1913 to 493 in 1914, or 10%.

INCREASE OF TEMPORARY CARE

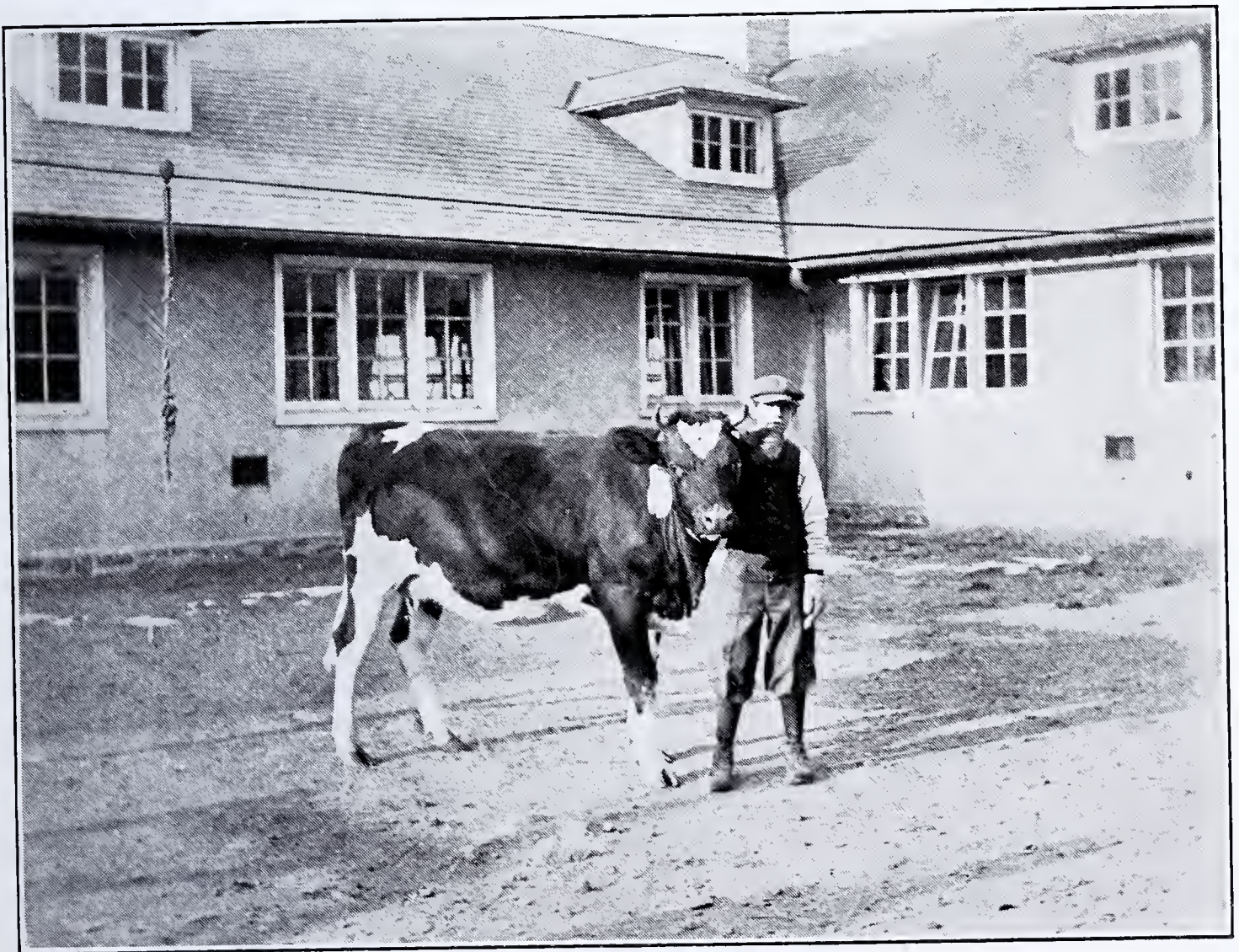
In order to meet the increased demands for Emergency Care in the city and make it possible for the co-operating agencies to agree upon a new policy of service the Seybert Institution has assumed larger responsibilities for such care while the other agencies have agreed upon the following expansion of their work: the Society to Protect Children from Cruelty, to increase its protective work in the city and to extend it geographically, and, at the same time, to decrease the purely care-taking work of that Society; the Children's Aid Society, to organize a division for placing special children in family homes of a better grade than can be obtained by the payment of board and to decrease the cost of temporary care given in the city.

THE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

The experience of the last few years has pointed toward the need for changes and re-adjustments in the work of the Village



OUTDOOR SPORTS ON THE POND



TAKING PRIDE IN THE FARM ANIMALS

in order to meet specific needs in the city of Philadelphia. This has resulted in a change of organization involving a reduction of expenditures at the Village and the assumption of larger responsibilities along lines of emergency care in the city.

The distribution of the children of the Village in 1914 according to agencies from which they were received, their social and racial status and the reasons for their admission are as follows:

Boys present, January 1, 1914	49
Boys received during the year	52
Boys discharged during the year	41
Boys remaining January 1, 1915	60

Received through the Children's Bureau:—

For Children's Aid Society	3
“ Juvenile Court	18
“ Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty	5
“ Relatives	1
“ Home of Good Shepherd	1
“ Children's Bureau	2
“ Bureau of Compulsory Education	1
“ Department of Health and Charities	21
	<hr/>
	52

In the course of 1914 the total number of boys discharged was 41. They were placed by the Children's Bureau as follows:

Relatives	19
Children's Aid Society	8
Juvenile Court	2
Glen Mills	2
Department of Public Health and Charities	5
Home Missionary Society	2
Jewish Foster Home	1
Juvenile Aid Society	1
Society for the Protection of Children from Cruelty	1
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	41

The total number of children at the Village on March 1st, 1915, was 60, or 11 more than on the same date of the previous year.

OBSERVATION DIVISION—CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

For some time the need has been felt for a well equipped institution on the cottage plan, to be used as an observation center for children whose mentality was in doubt. As no such facilities were available when the matter was being agitated most actively, the Directors undertook to meet a small fraction of the

need so far as their limited resources permitted by establishing an observation division in the Children's Village.

Scope and Function.

The division consisting of two cottages with the use of the school plant and other equipment of the Children's Village is intended to meet in part a two-fold need:

First: To care, under favorable conditions for observation and with stimulating surroundings, for backward children and those whose mentality is in doubt, with a view to securing fairly accurate and complete data upon which to base diagnoses.

Second: To provide temporary care for a limited number of feeble minded children for whom admission to the Pennsylvania Institution at Elwyn or to the State Training School at Spring City cannot be obtained at the time of need.

Plant.

The plant consists of two cottages with a combined capacity of 40 children, a school building with facilities for classes in kindergarten, grade work, manual training, printing and gymnasium, a modern farm with garden, dairy, poultry, and green house buildings, and 300 acres of land to be used in common with the same number of normal children.

Method of Record Keeping and Reporting.

Reports will be made of each child in the division based upon physical and mental examinations, the records of his work and progress in the different phases of his life in this division of the Village. These reports will be at the service of the examining neurologist, the Judge of the Juvenile Court, the probation officers, and the care-taking agencies to which application may be made on behalf of the child.

The records on which the reports are based will cover the following conditions and progress made while under observation:

1. Physical condition.
2. Mental condition as ascertained by various mental tests.
3. School work and progress.

4. Manual and Industrial Work.
5. Vocational bent.
6. Temperament, characteristics and moral tendencies.

Children will be examined at frequent intervals by the neurologists and the psychologist having charge of this work. As occasion requires, the Binet and other tests will be used and the records of these tests preserved. Strength and other tests will be applied from time to time to determine the child's physical development and progress.

Experimental Character of this Division.

This work is undertaken as an experiment for which there is little if any precedent in this or other countries in connection with agencies for dependent children. Experience has shown the necessity for changes in the organization and methods of this division which will have to be met from time to time.

THE BUREAU FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

For some time the social agencies of Philadelphia have felt the need for a Bureau which would collect, classify and interpret facts underlying social conditions and guide the agencies of the city in meeting the increasingly complex problems and needs of the community.

The Bureau for Social Research has been organized for this purpose and is under the supervision of a director and an advisory council made up of two members of the Board of Directors of the Seybert Institution and twelve persons directly or indirectly engaged in work relating to social service and social research.

The first inquiry of the Bureau for Social Research will deal with the methods, extent and efficiency of the Children's Agencies of Philadelphia, some of which have already shown a willingness to co-operate and assist in the task undertaken.

As this Bureau represents a new line of departure in social work in Philadelphia the first year of its activity will, necessarily, be of an experimental character.

SOME CHANGES IN THE CITY'S SOCIAL SERVICE WORK

Coincident with changes and adjustment of the work of the

Seybert Institution a number of changes among other agencies have taken place.

The Juvenile Court has been made a branch of the newly created municipal Court, with a single judge assigned for daily hearings of juvenile cases. This has taken the place of weekly or semi-weekly sittings of Judges of the Court of Common Pleas in rotation and marks a great advance over former conditions in this Court.

The Philadelphia Training School for Social Work has also been reorganized as the Pennsylvania School for Social Service and its directing staff as well as its management have been placed upon a more efficient basis.

New Building.

The activities of the Seybert Institution have been centered in the Charities Building and the annex, which was secured recently, and in which the Executive Office and the Bureau of Social Research are housed. The second and third floors of the annex are occupied by the Pennsylvania School for Social Service and the Registration Bureau.

The bookkeeping department of the Seybert Institution has also been transferred to the city and has its quarters in the Charities Building.

Community Needs.

In conclusion, the Institution would call attention to one or two apparent needs that, if met, would render the community equipment for social work vastly more effective.

- I. Adequate facilities for understanding the local problems of feeble-mindedness, which would include the following features:

- A. Diagnostic clinics with competent staffs in attendance in connection with such natural centers as the public schools, the Juvenile Court, the Department of Public Health and Charities, etc.
- B. In connection with these, facilities for the training and observation of a limited number of persons for brief periods.



THE NEW GREENHOUSE

- C. Facilities for longer periods of observation for border line cases, such as is now being conducted at the Children's Village. These facilities could appropriately be provided in connection with a parental school.
- D. A central record bureau where every clinic, agency, doctor or other individual dealing with persons of doubtful mentality could register cases.

2. A United Welfare Building to take the place of the present unsatisfactory quarters, known as the United Charities Building. These quarters should be of sufficient extent to receive also a large number of social welfare agencies, not now in the United Charities Building, on terms which would reduce their present rental charges. Such a building properly located and planned would increase appreciably the efficiency of the work of the agencies having quarters therein and would aid in securing closer co-operation as well as good feeling among workers and managers. An outright gift of such property to the charities of the city with an endowment sufficient to cover maintenance cost each year, would not only be an annual contribution to each agency equivalent to its present rental charges, but would constitute a convincing proof of the underlying unity of all social welfare undertakings.

